

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 /090 W

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R 010815Z MAR 76

FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1469

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO ALL MBFR MISSIONS 0191

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0082

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJ: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: SUMMARY REPORT FOR PERIOD FEB 23-29, 1976

1. BEGIN SUMMARY:. BOTH EAST AND WEST MADE STATEMENTS THIS WEEK AT THE FEB 26 PLENARY MEETING OF THE VIENNA FORCE REDUCTIONS NEGOTIATIONS. GDR REP OESER URGED ACCEPTANCE OF THE FEB 17 EASTERN PROPOSAL, CLAIMING THAT IT REPRESENTED A CONCESSION TO THE WEST ON PHASING, AND REJECTED THE AUGMENTED WESTERN PROGRAM AS STILL GIVING THE WEST UNILATERAL ADVANTAGES. FRG REP BEHREND'S ELABORATED ON THE APPROACH UNDERLYING THE DEC 16

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ALLIED NUCLEAR OFFER AND DEALT WITH EASTERN REACTIONS TO IT

THUS FAR.

2. IN THE FEB 24 INFORMAL SESSION, WESTERN PARTICIPANTS STRESSED THE ADVANTAGES OF THE DEC 16 WESTERN PROPOSAL AND SOUGHT A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION OF HOW THE LATEST EASTERN INITIATIVE MET WESTERN SECURITY INTERESTS. EASTERN REPS ARGUED THE MERITS OF THE NEW EASTERN PROPOSAL WITHOUT ADDING MUCH TO WHAT WAS ALREADY KNOWN ABOUT THAT PROPOSAL. ON FEB 27, THE AD HOC GROUP REPORTED TO NAC THAT THE FEB 17 EASTERN INITIATIVE WAS PROBABLY A TACTICAL MOVE INTENDED TO NEUTRALIZE THE WEST'S DEC 16 NUCLEAR OFFER AND TO FILL TIME WHILE THE EAST CONSIDERS ITS FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION. END SUMMARY

3. IN A STATEMENT DELIVERED AT THE FEB 26 PLENARY MEETING, GDR REP CLAIMED THE LATEST EASTERN MOVE REPRESENTED A CONCESSION TO THE WESTERN VIEW ON PHASING, BUT SAID THAT THE EAST EXPECTED A FIRST-STAGE COMMITMENT BY ALL NON-US WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO EQUIVALENT REDUCTION OBLIGATIONS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN A 1977/78 SECOND STAGE. GDR REP CRITICIZED WESTERN PROPOSALS, INCLUDING THE DEC 16 NUCLEAR OFFER, AS BEING INCONSISTENT WITH THE AGREED PRINCIPLES OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND STILL AIMED AT ALTERING THE EXISTING FORCE RELATIONSHIP TO UNILATERAL WESTERN ADVANTAGE.

4. IN HIS FEB 26 PLENARY STATEMENT, FRG REP BEHRENDT SAID THAT THE AUGMENTED WESTERN PROGRAM PROVIDED THE BASIS FOR AN AGREEMENT TAILORED TO THE ACTUAL SECURITY SITUATION IN THE AREA AND THE CONCERNS OF BOTH SIDES. HE STRESSED THE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED US NUCLEAR WITHDRAWALS AND THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF CONTRACTUALIZING THE EXISTING DISPARITIES IN GROUND FORCE MANPOWER AND TANKS. BEHRENDT STATED THAT THE MIX OF REDUCTIONS AND ASSOCIATED LIMITATIONS PROPOSED BY THE WEST WOULD LEAD TO AN EQUITABLE OUTCOME ENHANCING STABILITY AND STRENGTHENING THE SECURITY OF ALL PARTICIPANTS.

5. AT THE REGULAR POST-PLENARY PRESS BRIEFING, THE EASTERN SPOKESMAN GAVE CONSISTENTLY VAGUE ANSWERS TO REPEATED QUESTIONS SEEKING MORE PRECISE JUSTIFICATION OF THE ASSERTION THAT THE EAST HAD MOVED TO MEET THE WESTERN REQUIREMENT FOR PHASED REDUCTIONS. NUMEROUS EAST-WEST BILATERAL EXCHANGES DURING THE

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WEEK FAILED TO SHED MUCH ADDITIONAL LIGHT ON THIS AND OTHER UNCLEAR ELEMENTS OF THE EAST'S FEB 17 PROPOSAL. MOREOVER, EASTERN REPS OCCASIONALLY GAVE APPARENTLY CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS OF VARIOUS OF ITS ASPECTS. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH NETHERLANDS REP DE VOS AND BELGIAN REP ADRIAENSSEN, ROMANIAN REP ANINOIU ATTRIBUTED THE CONFUSION TO THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS AUTHORED THE NEW PROPOSAL WITHOUT ANY PRIOR COORDINATION EVEN WITH OTHER EASTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. A MORE LIKELY

EXPLANATION IS THAT MUCH OF THE EASTERN AMBIGUITY IS INTENDED FOR TACTICAL PURPOSES.

5. THE FEB 24 INFORMAL SESSION WAS UNEVENTFUL. WESTERN PARTICIPANTS STRESSED THE ADVANTAGES OF THE DEC 16 WESTERN PROPOSAL AND ASKED EASTERN REPS TO SHOW HOW THEIR RECENT INITIATIVE MET WESTERN SECURITY INTERESTS. EASTERN PARTICIPANTS STATED THAT THE OVERALL WESTERN REDUCTION APPROACH CONTINUED TO BE INEQUITABLE, WHILE ADDING LITTLE TO WHAT WAS ALREADY KNOWN ABOUT THE EAST'S NEW PROPOSAL. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE NEXT SESSION WOULD BE DEVOTED TO FORCE DEFINITIONS. WESTERN REPS, HOWEVER, REFUSED THE EASTERN SUGGESTION TO ADOPT A FIXED SCHEDULE OF FUTURE SESSIONS ALTERNATING BETWEEN GENERAL TOPICS AND DEFINITIONS.

6. ON FEB 25, THE AD HOC GROUP APPROVED, FOR DELIVERY BY FRG REP BEHREND ON FEB 27, THE GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE FIRST ORAL REPORT TO THE NAC OF THE CURRENT ROUND. IT CONTAINED THE PRELIMINARY JUDGMENT THAT THE FEB 17 EASTERN INITIATIVE WAS A TACTICAL MOVE INTENDED TO NEUTRALIZE THE WEST'S DEC 16 NUCLEAR OFFER AND TO FILL TIME WHILE THE EAST CONSIDERS ITS FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION. RESOR

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